

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15 USIA-15

ACDA-19 IO-15 AID-20 SAI-01 A-01 DRC-01 /149 W

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P 041903Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3834

SECDEF/ISA WASHDC PRIORITY

INFO JCS WASHDC PRIORITY

USCINCSO QUARRY HTS CZ PRIORITY

DIA WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 7326

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, MARR, AR

SUBJ: MILITARY MISSIONS IN ARGENTINA

REF: A. COMUSMILGP BUENOS AIRES ARGENTINA 021425Z OCT 73

B. COMUSMILGP BUENOS AIRES ARGENTINA 041330Z OCT 73

1. SUMMARY: REF (A) AND (B) PROVIDE LATEST INFORMATION PER DISCUSSIONS HELD THIS WEEK WITH ARGENTINE ARMY, NAVY AND AIR FORCE AUTHORITIES. MINISTER OF DEFENSE IS ACTIVELY STUDYING QUESTION OF ELIMINATION OF FOREIGN MILITARY MISSIONS. ARGENTINE ARMY APPARENTLY RECOMMENDS THAT ALL MISSIONS BE TERMINATED. ARGENTINE ARMY MAY HAVE SOME FLEXIBILITY IN DESIRING TO RETAIN A REDUCED SIZE ARMY SECTION AS A LIAISON OFFICE, NOT AS A MISSION. ARGENTINE NAVY AND ARGENTINE AF (AAF) WOULD PREFER TO RETAIN ALL MISSION PERSONNEL AND FUNCTIONS, BUT ARE NOW UNDER POLITICAL PRESSURE WHICH WOULD DICTATE ELIMINATING THE TERM "MISSION". ARGENTINE NAVY AND AAF SUGGEST PERHAPS RESTRUCTURING THE NAVY SECTION AND AF SECTION UNDER THE MILITARY ATTACHES TO PROVIDE A CLOSER PARALLEL ON THE SURFACE TO THE ARGENTINE MILITARY COMMISSIONS WHICH EXIST IN WASHINGTON, MIN OF DEFENSE WILL REPORTEDLY PROVIDE HIS VIEWS TO FOREIGN MINISTER AND TO PRESIDENT

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IN THE NEAR FUTURE. ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY REQUESTS STATE/

DOD VIEWS ON RECOMMENDED FALL-BACK POSITIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. THE COUNTRY TEAMS CURRENT ASSESSMENT IS THAT THE ARGENTINE NAVY AND THE ARGENTINE AF STRONGLY DESIRE THE CONTINUATION OF THE NAVY SECTION AND AIR FORCE SECTION OF US MILITARY GROUP, BASICALLY AS PRESENTLY CONSTITUTED, BUT THAT THEY ARE NOW UNDER STRONG PRESSURES TO ELIMINATE VESTIGES OF THESE ORGANIZATIONS AS FOREIGN "MILITARY MISSIONS". THE ARGENTINE ARMY, WHILE APPARENTLY DESIRING TO CONTINUE PARTICIPATION IN THE MILITARY ASSISTANCE TRAINING PROGRAM-- PERHAPS AT REDUCED LEVELS-- AND TO CONTINUE COOPERATIVE TIES WITH THE US IN SOME OTHER AREAS, INCLUDING MATERIEL, DESIRES THE ARMY MISSION AS SUCH TO BE TERMINATED BUT WOULD RETAIN A FEW OF THE ARMY SECTION FUNCTIONS AND PERSONNEL IN ANOTHER OFFICE, PREFERABLY UNDER THE DEFENSE ATTACHE. IT IS UNCERTAIN AT THIS TIME WHETHER ARGENTINE STUDY INCLUDES CONSIDERATION OF COMMANDER, US MILITARY GROUP, AND THE PLANS/ SUPPORT SECTION WHICH ARE NOT PART OF "MISSIONS" OR SERVICE SECTIONS. ESTIMATE IS THAT STUDY WILL INCLUDE THESE ELEMENTS. ASSESSMENT IS THAT GOA WOULD PREFER TO HAVE RENAMED SERVICE SECTIONS UNDER RESPECTIVE SERVICE ATTACHES BUT WOULD CONTINUE TO RELUCTANTLY ACCEPT MILITARY GROUP CONCEPT IF ESSENTIAL TO RETENTION OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE TRAINING PROGRAM AND OTHER SECURITY ASSISTANCE RELATED PROGRAMS.

3. THE EMBASSY POSITION IS THAT IF IT BECOMES POLITICALLY INFEASIBLE TO RETAIN THE US MILITARY MISSIONS UNDER THEIR PRESENT NAMES WE SHOULD BE PREPARED TO RAPIDLY RESPOND AND ADOPT SUCH TERMINOLOGY AND FORM AS WILL PERMIT THE US TO RETAIN THOSE MISSION PERSONNEL AND FUNCTIONS DESIRED BY HOST SERVICES. TOWARD THIS END WE RECOMMEND THE FOLLOWING BE CONSIDERED AS ACTIONS THE US SHOULD BE PREPARED TO TAKE:

A. CHANGE THE NAMES OF THE MISSIONS TO TERMINOLOGY POLITICALLY ACCEPTABLE TO THE GOA, E.G. "LIAISON OFFICE". ATTEMPT TO RETAIN THE EXISTING AGREEMENTS, MODIFIED AS NECESSARY, SINCE THEY AFFORD A QUASI DIPLOMATIC STATUS TO PERSONNEL AND PROVIDE CERTAIN DESIRABLE PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES.

B. IF NAME CHANGE IS REQUIRED AND AGREEMENTS CANNOT BE RETAINED, ATTEMPT TO PROVIDE MISSION PERSONNEL WITH DIPLOMATIC STATUS BY CONFIDENTIAL

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MEANS OF EXCHANGE OF NOTES, AND BE PREPARED FOR THE US TO PAY COSTS OF TRANSPORTATION OF PERSONNEL, HOUSEHOLD GOODS AND VEHICLES.

C. IF (A) AND (B) ARE NOT POSSIBLE AND IT BECOMES NECESSARY TO ATTACH PERSONNEL TO THE ATTACHE OFFICE, DO SO FOR ADMINISTRATIVE PURPOSES WHILE RETAINING THE PRESENT US CHAIN OF COMMAND.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: NEED SOONEST STATE/DOD VIEWS ON THE ABOVE PROPOSALS TO PERMIT EARLY RESPONSE TO THE CONCERNED ARGENTINE MILITARY SERVICES AND ALLOW THE EMBASSY TO HAVE PREPARED POSITIONS FROM WHICH TO NEGOTIATE THE RETENTION OF AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE OF THE PRESENT US MILITARY GROUP FUNCTION IN ARGENTINA.

GDS DEC 79.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973BUENOS07326
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS LODGE
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: BUENOS AIRES
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731051/aaaablur.tel
Line Count: 123
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A. COMUSMILGP BUENOS AIRES ARGENTINA
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15-Jan-2002 by shawdg>; APPROVED <06-Feb-2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MILITARY MISSIONS IN ARGENTINA
TAGS: MASS, MARR, AR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005